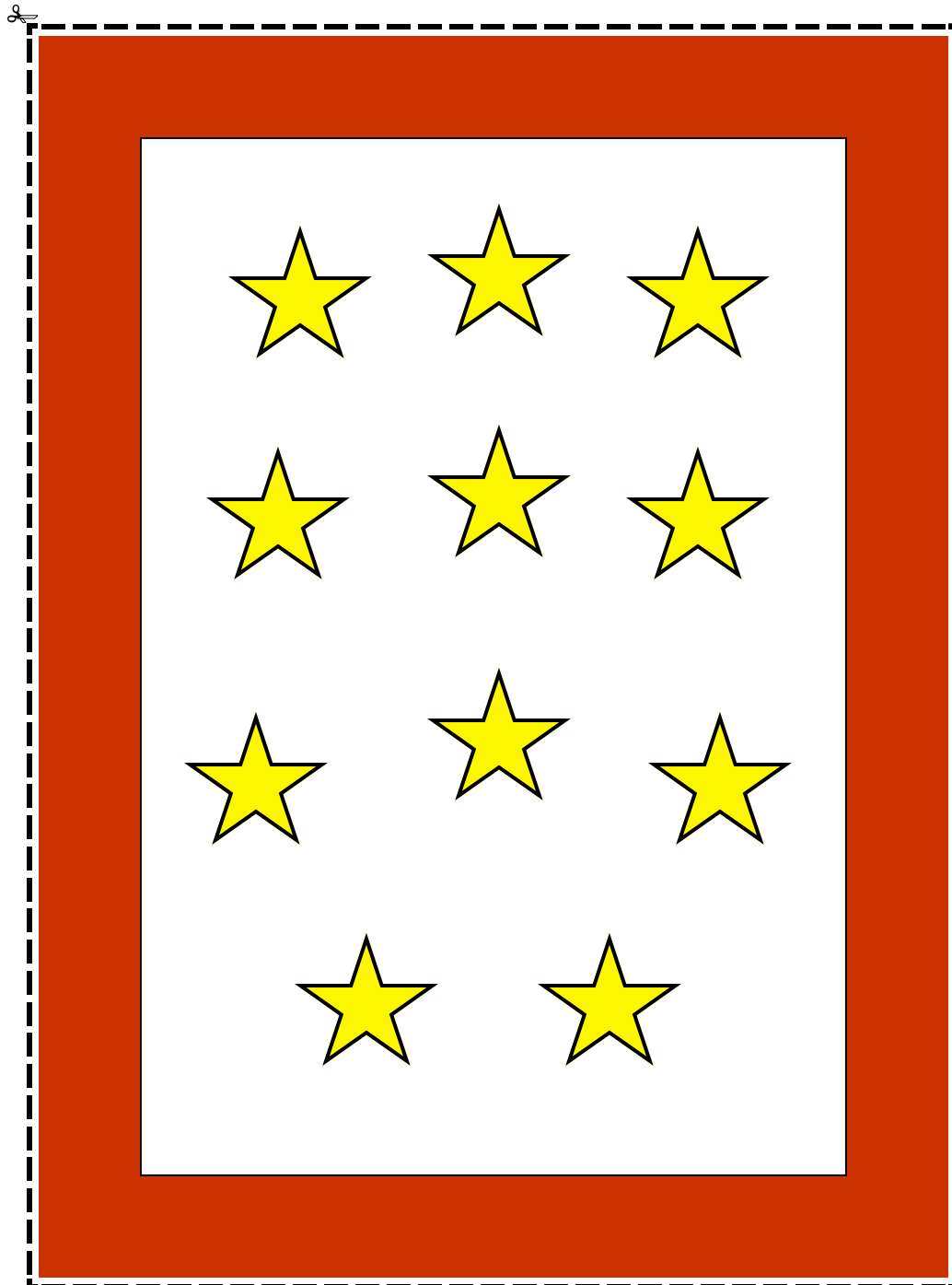


The Rose

Display this service man's flag below in honor of our heroes. We, the families of those who served under the 1st BN 25th MAR are forever bonded as Mothers, Fathers, Brothers, Sisters, Spouses, and Significant others to our 10 Marines and 1 Navy Corpsman who gave their lives to save our own.



LtCol Christopher Landro

I wrote this edition of my newsletter on the evening of September 11, 2006. All across America the citizens of our great nation remembered and reflected on that fateful day. Five years ago we were attacked in a manner and to a degree that few expected. The relative safety experienced by the separation of oceans was gone in a matter of minutes. Our way of life was attacked. Our belief system was attacked. Our diversity, tolerance, compassion, rule of law, liberties, freedom, progress; it was all attacked by a group of angry men who have hijacked a religion and twisted it in a self righteous attempt to justify their actions. I remember that day vividly. Like other days in our lives that leave a permanent marker, the assassination of JFK (one of my first memories – I was 4), our first step on the moon, the fall of the Berlin Wall - 9/11 will be forever etched in our psyche. I was at home in New Jersey. I remember worrying about my wife, pregnant with our second child, stranded in San Francisco. She had been scheduled on flight 93 up until the 1st of September when her meeting was rescheduled and she had to fly out on the 10th. I remember worrying about my sister because her office is directly across the street from the World Trade Center and I couldn't reach her on the phone. As a Marine Officer I remember saying to myself: "Stand By" which in jarhead jargon means get ready. That fateful day changed the course of history. Now, five years later, 1st Battalion, 25th Marines is nearing the end of our seven month deployment to Iraq and 12 month mobilization. For 600 of us it is our second mobilization (and for many a second trip to Iraq). For the rest of the Battalion it is their first mobilization, but almost to a man they all joined since 9/11 so there was little doubt this day might come.

There is no political statement to be made here, no endorsement or repudiation of policy, for we do not make policy but rather we are instruments of that policy. There is simply the cold fact that we are warriors, members of our Armed Forces who have all sworn an oath of office. For those of you who don't know our oath I will state it here, for those of you who do know, it always bears repeating: "I, Christopher A Landro, do solemnly swear, to support and defend the Constitution of the United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic. That I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same. That I take this oath freely, without mental reservation or purpose of evasion. That I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office upon which I am about to enter. So help me god." This is the oath that each one of us has committed to and which has brought us to where we are today. All of our lives changed on September 11th. As events unfolded since that day we have all known that it could lead us to a distant land and hostile conditions. We have trained hard and fought hard. The Marines and Sailors of Task Force 1/25 have performed and continue to perform in magnificent fashion and I could not be more proud of every member of this Battalion. Our job is not finished yet and we will remain focused, vigilant and aggressive in the pursuit of our mission. This is what Marines do best.

Our efforts come at a high price. We have lost ten of our brothers whom we miss dearly and will never forget. Ten of the finest men I will ever know. The greatest tribute I can pay to them is the steadfast guarantee that my children and their children will know who they were and the sacrifice they made. The thoughts and prayers of every member of this Battalion are with the families of our Guardian Angels. Though we grieve their loss the Battalion must press on. We are close to the end but not yet there. Rest assured that your loved ones will take care of each other until the day we are reunited with our 1/25 family at home. Your support and strength has been essential to our success and an inspiration to us all. We look forward to our homecoming with great anticipation. Not for glory or praise, but to return to the comfort of those we love and to stop the worry and anxiety you have faced all these months. Stay strong and stay focused. We are as proud of you as you are of us.

Semper Fidelis.

FROM THE BATTALION SERGEANT MAJOR

Sergeant Major Bradley Trudell

It is approaching midnight here in Iraq. One day closer to going home, one day farther from what seems like so long ago. Our start on this journey from where ever it was that we each began has so quickly passed for many of us. The fifth anniversary of September 11, 2001 and the events that caused us to be here have come and gone. Your Marines and Sailors continue to clearly demonstrate daily their constitution and mettle in the performance of the tasks required of them. As I have mentioned to you before, in the headquarters shops, and on the line company patrols where ever they are located each man is acquitting himself as necessary in performing his duties and together we are accomplishing a great thing, a great thing that defies articulation or summary. We are providing a future for America and an example for men and women everywhere that want to be able to choose to live as they desire. As I move about among these men and as I watch them and listen to them I am variously amused, humbled, and inspired. As we continue our mission the poignancy of the price we pay for what we are doing is striking. We have lost more of our brothers, LCpl Glover, Capt McKenna, Cpl Pierson, Cpl Shoemaker, LCpl Valdepeñas, LCpl Cosgrove and HM2 Walsh.

We continue to be motivated by the thoughts of home and while there is little gratification here there is a sense of satisfaction of doing and having done something bigger than ourselves and more important than can be easily quantified. It remains for us now to simply complete our mission and return to our loved ones.

This we will do.

Semper Fidelis

Brad Trudell

SgtMaj 1st Battalion 25th Marines

RCT-5

Al Fallujah, Al Anbar, Iraq

A few weeks ago, our country marked the fifth anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. We watched the news accounts of that day, and listened to the reflections of those whose lives were forever changed. As a country, we continue to heal. We also continue to be a nation at war.

As families of 1/25, you know what that war brings. You have sacrificed. You have been lonely, frustrated, scared, and proud. And soon, God willing, your Marine is coming home. It is time to rebuild your lives, and move on.

But wait. Your work is not done.

During this deployment, one of the first things you learned is that your family extends way beyond the four walls of your home. You are part of a larger family, the Marines. We took care of each other, held each other up, celebrated and mourned, sharing a bond not unlike the “esprit de corps” shared by our Marines and sailors.

So move on, but notice that the road before you has been altered. Your Marine has taken part in an unforgettable experience: war. It has changed him, and it has no doubt changed you as well. Move on, but take the lessons that this deployment has taught you – what your Marine has taught you – and apply them to your lives. Help your children remember this time, but go beyond. Share the stories of the Marines who didn’t return with their unit. Reach out to the families of those Marines, not just now, but in the coming years, when the loss of their presence will still be felt. Your Marine braved the constant threat of physical harm, in extreme heat, often with little sleep. They went months without a hug. And they performed their duties with integrity, honor and perseverance.

Now it’s your turn. When you see a chance to make a difference, take it. Live the values of honor, courage, commitment. Teach your children to do the same, in the same way our Marines do: lead by example. Because we are not just a family of Marines. We are part of an even bigger family. We are a nation

FROM THE BATTALION CHAPLAIN

Fr. Marc J. Bishop, LT, CHC, USNR

Since the last time I wrote, the Battalion has suffered more losses. The faces of each young man are emblazoned in my mind. When I close my eyes I see them: Capt. John McKenna, LCpl Michael Glover, Cpl Jordan Pierson, Cpl Jared Shoemaker, LCpl Eric Valdepeñas, HM2 Christopher Walsh and LCpl Christopher Cosgrove III. Over the last month I have had the privileged to sit with Marines and Sailors and talk about the impact each of these men has both on the command and their brothers. These are hard conversations. Conversations that must be had to honor the memory of our brothers; as continuing the mission honors them. These men will be missed and their memories will forever be honored in our prayers and actions.

The mission soon will be completed for us. The call of home is louder than the sound of the guns. Like any transition the homecoming is fraught with dreams and fears. Simply, the stress of learning how to be a family again may be difficult. This is hard for adults; children may have varying reactions to the return and reunion. There reactions may add stress and greater joy; either way the key phrase is *"Be Patient."* Relationships need time to be reformed after a year long separation. Children's reactions are not necessarily predictable.

"How do we reclaim our family?" It starts with respecting the need for one-on-one time and family time. Each member of the family needs to spend time with the returning Marine or Sailor. This doesn't need to happen immediately but it does need to happen deliberately and purposefully. Children need to know that the returning parent or family member was thinking of them and that time together was something desired. Balanced with organized family activities time will reform theses relationships and the bonds of family will be strengthened.

"What should we do?" The answers to this are as diverse as the number of children, spouses and significant others there are. The short answer is do the things that you enjoy. Let the time be filled with play. Do things that foster interaction. Going to the movies together is great but make sure it's tied with a meal, or getting ice cream, so that conversation is promoted. I would suggest going for the ice cream after the movie to make sure you have something to talk about. Family time need not be elaborate. Having the returning family member read a book to children before bed time can be a wonderful way to reinitiate into family life. Board games are also fun and foster group interaction. Children will react differently and the family dynamic may have its up's and down's; the key is patients.

Some of you may remember that my nephew was a recruit at MCRD Parris Island, Today, September 15, 2006, is his graduation day. He will be at Camp Lejeune when I am going through the demobilization process there. I look forward to receiving and retuning his salute.

A sincere and wholehearted thank you to all those who so generously supported us with care packages (I loved the cookies). Each box made home that much closer. There were many times that the boxes would block me from getting to my hooch and I would spend several hours opening boxes and displaying there contents for the men to take. I hope to extend personal thanks at the homecoming and the Birthday Ball.

You are remembered in my prayers and I trust in yours,

Blessings,
Fr. Marc Bishop

TINA MCINTOSH—PROUD NAVY CORPSMAN WIFE

Many will say "Something needs to be done" but few will say "I will do what I can". Many will say "there's something wrong" with a situation, but few will say "How can I fix it?" In a world of many, be one of the few who is willing to give to others, for their good, and expect nothing in return. Our Marines and Sailors have led by example and stepped up to the plate making us all VERY proud!!

I want to personally thank the Marines of PSD for keeping my Sailor safe through this deployment and bringing him home safe to us. I hope you all enjoyed your new pillows, helmet liners, water toys and sports equipment Shelby and I sent. It was our pleasure and the least we could do for you all. Shelby shows the picture you sent her to everyone she knows. You truly are a 12 year old little girls hero and will always be "KINGS" in her book. God bless you all and you will always be in our hearts.

I wish you and your loved ones a very Happy return. My heart felt sympathy goes to the families of those we have lost along the way. This deployment will end for us as families but will go on in the hearts and minds of our Marines and Sailors. Please be there for them....hug them...hold them...and tell them just how much you love them. God Bless! I hope to meet you all at the ball!!

Tina McIntosh

PROUD NAVY WIFE!!



PSD with burger king crowns Shelby scratched out burger and put PSD so it would say "PSD KINGS" heehee. They all put them on with the water toys she sent.

FROM THE ALPHA COMPANY COMMAND

Major Keith Sykes

Dear Alpha Company Friends and Family,

I am sure you all are anticipating our return almost as much as we are. A number of dates have been passed, unofficially, regarding our departure and arrival dates and as with every deployment there is always speculation regarding our being delayed or extended. You can put your fears to rest in that regard, we are forging ahead as scheduled. Obviously we can not pass the dates of our departure and moreover, up until we get on the plane, all flights are subject to change. It is not because we do not plan or do not care, it is merely a fact that military transportation is scheduled based on availability of limited assets and in accordance with a list of priorities. It is not only possible but quite likely that flights will shift a day or two here and there, that is just the way it works; please do not read anything more into it.

The Marines, as always, have been doing a bang up job, they are as focused and as determined as ever; constant diligence is the only guarantee of success and safety. We will continue to fight as hard as ever to the point we get on that plane. The late night patrols and constant activity we experience although tiresome make the time go by more quickly. Because of your Marines effectiveness with the local population, the insurgents are fighting harder than ever and your Marines are fighting right back. The daily acts of bravery and kindness do not always make the news papers; it is more often the loss of a fellow Marine or an equally unfortunate incident that takes the front page. We have all suffered greatly from the recent losses but rather than become sullen and dejected, it has steeled our resolve to make sure that in the end, lives lost were not lives wasted.

The Marines are looking forward to the ball. Most years there seems to be an attitude of "Well, we have to go, it is a required event." This year is different, Marines are anxious to have one last time together, to meet each others wives and girlfriends, to share a laugh, a story, and even a tear for those not with us. Unlike other Marine Corps balls, after this one, we will likely never again see those who have shared in some of our hardships and experiences and thus on many levels, it will be much more meaningful. For many of you it will be the first time that you see the faces of others whom you have come to know through e-mails and chat rooms and stories from your Marines. We are all looking forward to seeing you soon, keep up the prayers and letters, they mean more than you can ever imagine.

Best Regards,

Keith A. Sykes

Company Commanding Officer

FROM THE

ALPHA COMPANY COMMAND

We are really winding down now. One of the challenges we have faced during the home stretch is in keeping the Marines focused. It has not proven to be as difficult as I thought it would be however. I am in awe of their performance. Everyone should be so proud of them. This has to be one of the toughest, dirtiest and most dangerous jobs yet your Marines do it with smiles on their faces every single day. They are fearless. In fact, we often find ourselves holding them back. I have been on active duty for well over a decade now and over half of my time in the Marine Corps was spent as an enlisted man. Your Marines here with me now in Iraq are the BEST I have ever served with hands down. Not much longer now and we'll be heading home. Thank you all for your support, it has an immeasurable impact. I ask that you continue to pray for us and to keep our sister Companies in mind as well. Thanks again and we'll see you soon.

Respectfully,
Capt Hodges
Executive Officer

Hello to All,

Well we're almost at the end. It's kind of hard to believe we've been here this long but we haven't dropped our packs yet. We send our best wishes to Sergeant John Hanni, Corporal Brian Smith, Corporal Lucas Reardon, Corporal Brian Williams, Lance Corporal Patrick Gibbs, Lance Corporal Cody Baker, and Lance Corporal Michael Dodson. We think of our sick and wounded and hope that they are well and healing fast. Hopefully we'll all be reunited again at the Ball.

Alpha company has done some tremendous things here in Iraq. We've come many miles and succeeded in many different ways as individuals and as a company. As we separate and go our own ways it will be hard, because knowingly we'll separate as the elite team that we worked so hard to form. Secondly we probably won't see a lot of individuals for the rest of our careers. We will have the fond thoughts memories of our fellow Marines and friendships.

I'd like to thank all that were involved behind the scenes. If I had to mention all the names I don't think there would be enough room in the Rose newsletter. Thanks again.

I'll see everyone soon.
First Sergeant Lodi

FROM THE **ALPHA COMPANY COMMAND**

Well, it appears that our time here is coming to an end. I would like to thank all of those who took the time out to support us over here. I can't begin to tell you how much we truly appreciate it. All of the care packages and letters and especially the drawings from the kids were a huge moral booster for us. I know that a lot of time and care had gone into getting us things we missed from home. The effort was outstanding, Thank you very much.

As we get closer to redeploying back to the U.S. the tempo here has not gotten any slower. In fact we have stepped it up a notch or two. Your Marines continue to perform their duties in a quiet yet professional manner each day. This company has come a long way since the cold days at Ft. Devens and 29 Palms and it shows. You have a lot to be proud of; I see this on a daily basis. Everyone here has made a contribution to the "one team" concept. There is still plenty of work to do when our relief shows up. We are going to set 1/24 up for success in a similar way as 2/6 and 3/5 set us up. We haven't dropped our packs yet but there is a bright light at the end of the tunnel and it is now in sight.

I hope everyone enjoys the Home coming. It has been my pleasure to serve with the Marines of A Company 1/25.

Gunnery Sergeant Drake

Company Gunnery Sergeant

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING MARINES!!! **RANKS REFLECT NEW RANK PROMOTED TO:**

Combat Meritorious Promotion

Corporal Jason R. Cox

Lance Corporal Stephen F. Platt

Lance Corporal Thomas J. Neill



Congratulations to Sgt Walter Dow
and his fiancée Kelly Chabre who became engaged in April.

FROM YOUR ALPHA COMPANY KEY VOLUNTEER FOR MASSACHUSETTS

KATHLEEN COVEL -PROUD MARINE MOM

We think of Our Marines and Corpsmen and the courage they demonstrate in Iraq. This keeps us honest and true to our commitment. Our hope is for a secure plan to be arranged for our loved ones' journey back to U.S. soil. When the time is right, Command will inform our Marines and Corpsmen of detail of return. Then, family will get information from them, which they will be provided to pass along. We are excited, but want their safety and their security to be paramount. Kathleen Covell kcovell@comcast.net / 978-793-0341.

Respectfully: To families of those we have lost, we hold the memory of your treasured loved one dear in our thoughts and prayers. To the wounded, and their concerned families, our hope is the healing process is guided by gentle hands to encourage steady improvement.

At times during this deployment it has been my task as a KV to communicate sad news. I've been humbled by responses: A wife sent me a note. I thanked her, she said, "Anytime Kath...If you ever need anything I am here. That's what this is all about helping each other through this." A mom wrote, "...I pray for all sons to come home safely..." Another said, "...we all feel sadness as spouses and parents, brothers and sisters, these kids are part of our family, it hurts..." A phone call: "I was in Vietnam as a Marine. I still feel for those who were injured and those we lost, we must remember and honor these guys."

Recently, at a service for a fallen Marine, I extended condolences and told his mom my son is with 1st 25th in Iraq. She wanted to know the Company, how he's doing, and thanked me for coming. She took my hands in her own and said she would keep my son in her prayers. I thanked her, left the funeral home, and found my Kleenex. I took a moment to reflect that these families, and so many others, demonstrate overwhelming pride in their son being a Marine or Navy Corpsman and part of the bigger United States Military Family. Perhaps honor and patriotism doesn't always hit the evening news, but each person who attends a service for a fallen military hero does feel blessed, quieted, and moves forward with renewed purpose.

Care Packages: A current NYC Puzzle was sent and a Flag of Honor, which lists the heroes of Sept. 11th. We Will Never Forget Them. We saw this very moving tribute displayed in a window in NJ last fall and it was honorably displayed again in New York City. We decided to order it for the guys. The Sept. box contained finger print American flags done by 1st Grade, Stow along with little pipe cleaner people to keep the guys feeling the love from children here in the U.S.A. Paper hearts with American Flags were done by children of the Piccolo Mondo Learning Center. Cards were donated by the Lancaster 4H. Butter and cheese crackers and mini boxes of raisins were given by Nanny, Mary V., and Aunt Denise. Also provided anonymously were lots of die cast cars and a large bag of assorted candies for Iraqi children.

Lydia, Priscilla, Abbie, Erin all sent this: Go to www.letsaythanks.com and pick out a thank you card. Xerox will print it and send it to a soldier in Iraq. You can't pick out who gets it; it will go to a member of the armed services. It is FREE, takes a second, and wouldn't it be wonderful if they received a bunch of these?

Almost done, you are human and each day isn't going to be perfect. Just do your best, and believe...

Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the little voice at the end of the day that says,

I'll try again tomorrow. Mary Anne Radmacher

.....

Major Keith Sykes – You provided us with explanation for being in Iraq and the belief that all people are entitled to preservation of human dignities. You shared observations of and pride in Alpha Company's accomplishments. The respect you showed Marines of all ranks fueled their spirits. We thank you.

1st Sgt Albert Lodie – We are thankful you remained to heal your back. You took a personal interest in men completing dessert training in CA. Families were relieved that you were protecting and delivering their loved ones safely to Iraq. We appreciated news of promotions, photos, and reminder of importance of hearing from loved ones. We thank you.

Captain Matt Hodges – We welcomed messages about our guys focusing on the job, eventually getting cool air to let them rest, news of new surroundings, better communication, and assurances of their safety. You took the edge off stress at home by sharing information of improved conditions. We thank you.

GySgt Wesley Drake – Your message about thanks for support and sending packages made us feel useful to have provided the guys with a morale boost. Gym and improved Chow references make us want to greet our new, streamlined Marines. We thank you.

FROM BRAVO COMPANY



Captain John J. McKenna IV



LCpl Michael D. Glover

the 25th Psalm gives words to our prayer: *“Relieve the anguish of my heart and set me free from distress.”* The anguish and distress is the sadness felt at the loss of LCpl Michael Glover and Capt. John McKenna. There is a weight that seemingly sits on the chest almost making it too hard to breath. This weight is lessened each time we talk of Michael and John. When we allow ourselves the moment to talk of our friends: the joys and struggles that truly define our lived experience. We engaged in conversation with laughter and tears; fleeting moments of joy in the midst of grief. These are the essential moments that free us from the pain of death and focus us, on the promise of life; new and everlasting life. —Father Marc Bishop 1/25 Battalion Chaplin

Our hearts are with the brave men that entered the gates of heaven and the families of these Marines left behind. You are physically back home but are spiritually with us, your son's brothers.

Hello to all Bravo Co. Family and Friends,

The kids are back in school (it sure is nice to hear the alarm clock buzzing in the morning) Well, yet another New England season has come and gone. The hot sticky days of June and July are in the past. The leaves are starting to change colors and fall is rushing its way in. I hope everyone had a great summer and took lots of pictures to share with their Marine/Sailor.

It is now time to start getting ready for apple picking and start dressing up the little ones go out and gets some candy. These are some of the great things to be looking forward too. Before you know, there will be snow on the ground and we will be hearing jingle bells.

Scary thoughts !!!!

So who do you think is more excited at this point, the families and friends of Bravo Company, or the Marines/Sailors themselves? I am sure that we are all getting very excited and overwhelmed that the men will be home soon. But, we have to help keep our loved ones heads on the missions at hand. You have all done such a great job over the past year we are almost there! Keep up the good work. Our Marines and Sailors are just as proud of you as you are of them. Nothing that you all have done for the Men of Bravo has gone unnoticed. Please keep your heads up and keep a smile on and your hearts filled with love for our Marines/Sailors can feel your love.

I want to give you all some dates of events that are coming up for Bravo Co.

September 23 @ 11:30am we are going to have a **Return Reunion Briefing / Banner making day**
We will go over reunion tips - how to handle issues with your Marine/ Sailor

Banner Making will happen right after the briefing

Please bring sheets or poster board (anything that you would like to use for a banner) along with banner making supplies. We will have some supplies on hand i.e. pants, markers, stickers.

Lunch will be provided RSVP by Sept 20th to KVC Michelle Proulx michelle.proulx@yahoo.com

We will be talking about homecoming !!!

I would like to have a slide show running through out the time we are awaiting for our Marines/Sailors. So I am asking that if you have any pictures that you would like to share from the deployment (at home saying good bye and be safe) to their time in California and in Iraq. Please bring me a copy, or you may send them to me. I would love to add pictures of new babies born, or weddings that happened during leave time.

December 9th

Bravo Co. Marine Corps Birthday Ball

Sheraton Nashua Hotel

11 Tara Boulevard

Nashua, NH

More information coming soon

Please mark your calendars now for the event

Below is the link to the Sheraton to book your room early.

<http://www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/booking/reservation?id=0607105033&key=96711>

I want to say that you have all done such a wonderful job, through all this. The past 11mnths have been tough at times, but you have all hung in there and helped your Marines and Sailors get through it all. You are all very wonderful people and deserve a hug. THANK YOU!

Please take care and God Bless,

Michelle Proulx KVC Bravo Co.

Michelle.proulx@yahoo.com

Our beautiful son was born on July 25 at 8:48 am. 6 lbs 11 oz 19 1/2 in. his name is Steven Ryan Edwards. Stacy Edwards
(Proud wife of Cpl Steven D Edwards of Bravo Co)



FROM THE CHARLIE COMPANY FIRST SERGEANT

First Sergeant Ben Grainger



Saddened Hearts

It's with a saddened heart that I returned to Charlie Company last night as we have lost a great Marine to the rigors of combat in Iraq, Cpl Jordan Pierson. Cpl Pierson had been a bright spot in his platoon, in a place, that can take the softest of hearts into a void of darkness. Even when the gloom of combat reached deep in a man soul, Cpl Pierson

could bring the Marine back to a sense of purpose, a sense of why we were here, and that we were making a difference. Cpl Pierson was destined not to only be a Marine, but a leader among Marines. He fostered a sense of caring for Marines while still embodying all it meant to be a Marine. Like before, it has sent a tidal wave of mixed emotion throughout the company at a time when we were just getting through the loss of LCpl Dechen. Marines are saddened and angered as they deal with the loss that they know has not only hurt them but his family back home. Marines are here to protect the American family and Cpl Pierson was one who strongly believed in that. That no harm would befall any American as long as he had the title of Marine. He fostered such a positive spirit that it was contagious to all even to an old 1stSgt, a spirit that made people proud to do what they were doing. He carried us all through another day here on many occasions. Another cut has been sliced across the heart of every Marine here; a cut that has hurt deep, but with time will hopefully heal. A cut that will forever remind us of the Marine Cpl Pierson was. A cut that will heal, slowly over time, but we will forever look upon and remember are fallen brother until we are all once again joined and are hearts are finally mended. We miss you Jordan, Semper Fi

FROM THE CHARLIE COMPANY FIRST SERGEANT

First Sergeant Ben Grainger



LCpl Christopher Cosgrove III was the type of Marine that nothing would get him down. He spoke so proudly of his family and fiancé back in Jersey, but then again he was the type of Marine that considered everyone family. He had a nurturing sense to him as he took care of everyone and thought of everyone before himself. Never did I see him when he didn't have a big grin on his face and give a warm hello from his heart. He was always smiling. In the stress of Iraq people tend to get under each others skin, no one could ever say that about Christopher Cosgrove, every last Marine that knew him loved him. Many a night as I sat tired and burned out Christopher

would stop by my sandbagged office, I think just to check on me, he would take a handful of the letters I was working on and answer back to people who had sent Marines Donations. He especially loved answering the kids who would send cards. That was the type of Marine he was though, taking care of even the 1stSgt, his enthusiasm had a way of charging my old batteries back up for another day. What he talked the most about though was going home and getting married to his sweetheart. She was the love of his life. As I packed away his photos last night, to send home, I paused at everyone to put a face to all the stories he had ever told me. You could tell she thought the same of him as they looked so perfect together. There are no answers for the pain they all feel today nor the pain we all feel. Christopher was an example of all of the good things in life and the good things we were trying to do here. He carried the spirit of freedom and happiness for all and never let things get him or those around him down. We can all say we are a better Marine for having served with someone who lived by the Marine Corps virtues of Honor, Courage, and Commitment. We can all say we are better Marines because he genuinely loved us all. New Jersey can stand proud of their Marine who has given his all.

To Our Charminglly Stubborn 1stSgt,

1stSgt Grainger, this is one of multiple attempts to match your eloquence of words and I have finally realized that this feat is vastly impossible, as every single word that you have written has touched the hearts of Charlie families in an indescribable and utterly unforgettable way. I could not possibly begin to express what all your amazingly soulful insights as well as your great lighthearted attitude have meant to me and obviously every single Charlie family member. A simple thank you just does not seem to cut it as you have single-handedly kept us all sane, delightfully informed, and have molded us into a close-knit family!!!

We have all truly grown throughout this deployment. As I look back at some of the first updates you sent (yes, I have saved them all) out to a growing distribution list I see you training not only your Marines for war but ingeniously beginning to prepare your Marines families for the deployment. Then, families were worried about food they sent going stale and you were making sure they kept their Marines motivated or else they'd be dealing with the 1stSgt. You selflessly still made it a priority to take care of Charlie even though you were slated to deploy with H&S. Miraculously, perhaps by your own stubborn ol' 1stSgt ways or by the immaculate grace of god, last minute plans were made and you were placed where your heart lied with the Charlie Marines and Sailors. Now as the deployment nears to an end, we are all constantly checking our inboxes, scanning for your update that has grown into what we all know and love as the "Fallujah Courant", nodding, laughing, or crying as we read. The Corner is a source of insight that is strikingly profound and thought provoking. The Daily Life Corner has given us a peek into the world our loved ones live in that we can never know. The marriage tips and Americantology stories have brought laughter and ease to our minds. Now, families confide in you as a dear friend. They debate with you like we are simply sitting around the dinner table and you have made it a point to be straight forward and truthful as we are not just the families of your Marines but "we are family"!

We are so incredibly proud of all our Marines and Sailors and are especially proud to have you as their Company Commander, leading them through the triumphs of victory and guiding them through the sorrows of loss, yet always standing by their sides. You have handled the burden of your position with bravery, integrity, and grace; you have absolutely gone above and beyond setting a new standard of leadership and heroism. Thank you for loving our sons, husbands, brothers, fathers' fiancé's, and boyfriends as much as we do. Thank you for dedicating your little down time to easing our fears, educating our minds, and sharing our pain. Thank you for helping us to understand the rigors of combat and the loyalty of brotherhood. Thank you "For Love of Country" Americantology, which is sweeping over the entire world!! Thank you for keeping our Marines and Sailors motivated and sharp. Thank you for trusting us with your personal feelings and thoughts. Thank you for getting the families of Charlie involved and bringing us together as a family. Thank you for your strength.

And, Thank you for making the job of being a Charlie Key Volunteer ten million times easier, you treated our questions as priorities and kept everything running smooth!!!

I haven't even begun to scratch the surface on how much we as Charlie Family Members and Key Volunteers appreciate everything you have done for our Marines, Sailors, and for us. I know the shoe will never be on the other foot as we will never be in a position such as yours but hopefully someday we will have the opportunity to honor you as you have honestly honored us. Until this opportunity arises, I guess, a simple thank you will just have to suffice. We all look forward to your speedy and safe return home and I know many look forward to finally meeting the famous 1stSgt, whose words got them through the tough days of deployment, in person.

- Thank you -

Sincerely,

Melissa Malm
Proud Marine Wife

- And -

Charlie KVC

P.S. I'm still plotting my revenge, you know why! Watch out, revenge just may come in shades of blue and Green!!!

First Sergeant Leon Rideout

Greetings from Camp Baharia! Once again, it seems hard to believe another month has passed by; H&S Company has continued to charge full steam ahead. With its many missions supporting the Battalion. Contacts have been made with the unit that will replace 1/25 in theatre and plans are being made toward that transition. This has not reduced our operation tempo. We will continue operations as well as make as many improvements possible to leave the best possible battle space for our replacements.

I would like to thank Chaplain Bishop and RP Pratt for there outstanding efforts in support of the Marines through many initiatives Such as Cigar Night, Friday Night Movies and the religious services. H&S Company's Corpsman have distinguished themselves by serving throughout the AO side by side with our Marines truly becoming brothers in arms. We continue efforts to keep our Marines and Sailors in touch with all of you as often as possible but that frequency will continue to depend on duties and location. Upgraded laptops have arrived for the internet Café and are noticeably faster than the older models. This will hopefully improve communications with home.

Congratulations to Sgt & Mrs. Stone on the birth of their baby Aidan and to SSgt and Mrs. Conway on the arrival of their son.

We congratulate the following Marines on earning promotions in August and September!!!

LCpl. Shepard

LCpl Noyola

Marines promoted meritourisly

Cpl Frates

Cpl Gregoire

Cpl Pugsley

Marine Promoted Combat Meritourisly

Cpl Tucker



Cpl Pugsley receives a pat on the shoulder from Major Russo the Executive Officer of the Battalion



LCpl Noyola swears in



Cpl Pugsley and Cpl Gregoire swear in.

As some of you may already know, Sgt Stone and I had a baby boy on September 1st. He is healthy and has brought us great joy in our lives. I experienced some complications towards the end of my pregnancy and I wanted to thank all of the Marine families for your support during what was one of the greatest challenges in my life.

As we near Homecoming, it might be a good idea to familiarize yourself with the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD. Often, a family member or spouse can recognize the symptoms better than the person suffering from it.

PTSD is a psychiatric disorder that can occur following the experience of a life-threatening event, including military combat. People with PTSD often relive the experience through nightmares and flashbacks, having difficulty sleeping, and feel estranged and these symptoms can significantly impair the person's life.

PTSD can also impact social functioning. A study showed that some Vietnam veterans with PTSD were found to have problems with family and interpersonal relationships and problems with employment. Headaches, immune system problems, dizziness, chest pains and overall discomfort are common in people with PTSD.

PTSD is treated with different forms of psychotherapy (talk therapy) and drug therapy.

Don't let the thoughts of PTSD dampen your excitement of the return of your Marine. These are just some warning signs to keep in the back of your mind to help something that can be treated from becoming worse.

As part of the last newsletter, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the 1/25 Marines and the Chain of Command for their courage, heroism and excellent service. I can't wait to see you at Homecoming!

The H & S key volunteers would like to offer this message:

To the Command of H & S Company—

The Key Volunteers together with the families of H&S Company would like to thank you. As family members it is hard to watch our loved one prepare to go into combat, however, knowing that they were in your competent hands was more assuring. In the days that we waited for our loved one to return we found ourselves waiting for something more than that. Each month we waited to get the newsletter, see your name on the heading and read about what our H&S Marines/Sailors were doing. Getting to see pictures was that much better! Somehow, reading your report from Iraq made us feel better, more connected. Saying "Thanks" just does not cover what that connection meant to us. Your confidence and praise for the men we love was icing on the cake!! From the bottom of our hearts, thank you...

DANIELLE SABOURIN—PROUD MARINE WIFE

I have never awaited fall like I have this year. This should be the last newsletter you read before our beloved Marines and Sailors come home. I have been waiting for this last one all year.

To the H&S families that I have come to know and further come to consider friends; thank you. I enjoyed spending time with you at all of our functions, our email correspondence and I loved getting to know you and your family. We, the Key Volunteers, are going through a tough deployment too and we are doing the best that we can. We have bad days too... but we also chose to take on the responsibility of being a representative for families as well. Sometimes that was a hard balance, but thanks to the amazing families of H&S, I always got a sweet email saying thanks or just 'hello there' at exactly the time I needed it – and it made it all worth it. You all were so generous with sweet emails or face to face thank yous. I never thought I would become as close to you as I have. It was my honor and pleasure to walk alongside you during this deployment. I hope I helped you through as you did me. Just because the monthly "happy Aug, Sept etc" emails may cease that I sent every month, please know I welcome the chance to hear from all of you at any time!

To the ever popular Gunnery Sergeant Walz; What would we have done without you? The website is amazing and we have you to thank for it. You came in and became the Key Volunteer Network's "go to guy". You never let us down, you never let us feel that we did not have your support. You never let us feel like we were bothering you; just the opposite in fact. Your energy and enthusiasm were so much fun! On a personal note, you will be thought of every time I walk into the HTC and see my husband's "chocolate chip" (Desert Storm) cammies on the wall. You not only "redecorated" our website but you actually redecorated the HTC! I thoroughly enjoyed getting to know you and your beautiful family. You will always be remembered as Keiley's first crush!! No one will ever react to my girls' high fives quite like Gy Walz. You will be sorely missed my friend. Next time I visit my old stomping grounds in Cali, I will be sure to make time to see you and your family... but only if you cook my famous steak tip recipe!! This deployment was easier for MANY people because of you. Thank you. I am passing the torch – you are the new "good piece of gear!"

To my fellow Key Volunteers Kath, Sheila, Julie, Charlotte and Colleen; words cannot describe how I feel about all of you. Most of us went into this as strangers, we now emerge as friends. You all made a difference this year. You all stepped up and said "sure, I will do all that I can for the families of 1/25". The fact that you did, coupled with your grace under fire this year are true testaments to your dedication, generosity and class. I will never forget the laughs we had in meetings, the slip and slide fun we had at my house, and the pride I felt standing next to every one of you at functions.

To our Marines and Sailors; we are so abundantly proud of you. I am in awe of you all. You are the example that all Americans should learn from. You should be proud of your families, they too fought a war this year... one of fear, loneliness and courage. Just as you persevered on the battlefields, they persevered on the home front. Each and every one of you is blessed – you are so loved by your family. We look forward to welcoming you home with open arms when you return safe, sound, alive and well. I couldn't talk about Marines without mentioning **my husband... Mark**, you will never know how proud I am to be your wife. As you know, this isn't the first deployment we have weathered and I wouldn't be surprised if it wasn't the last one. I will stand by your side through any and every deployment you volunteer for or are ordered to – you are worth it. You are my Hero! Our children have missed you terribly but you have also taught them so many life lessons. They will grow up to be strong, independent and always faithful. You have fought to ensure their freedom and they will never take it for granted. You have instilled a sense of patriotism and pride that isn't common in children today – how many little girls can sing the Marine Corps hymn correctly (with an Ooh-rah at the end) at age three? They will always have the coolest dad at Career Day!! We love you and have missed you so much.

To my friend Chuck Delcourt – it is official, you WON the hand written letter competition! If anyone would wage a letter writing competition on who could write to me more than my husband it would be you. You are right – competition does breed excellence! In my husband's defense – he did send three rounds of flowers and email whenever he could! Love ya... forget Disney – think Turks and Caicos!!!

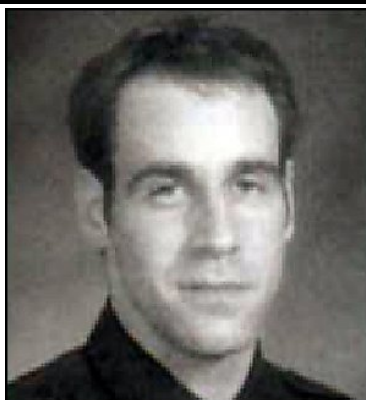
As the deployment and activation come to a close, so does my corner. I hope I have brought you laughs, smiles and a little bit of "I can do this" attitude over the last 10 months. You have done it – and you have done well. It has been my pleasure to be your H&S Key Volunteer Coordinator.

Warmest regards,
Danielle

First Sergeant Charles Delcourt



LCpl Eric P. Valdepeñas



HM2 Christopher G. Walsh



Cpl Jared M. Shoemaker

"Our brothers who have been received by God"—Father Roger Gagne'

We enter into this month with a heavy heart as we feel the loss of three of our brothers. A tragedy struck us as Weapons Company on a very dark day 04 September 2006. Forever in our hearts and minds will be Cpl Jared Shoemaker, LCpl Eric Valdepeñas, and HM2 Christopher Walsh. During these times our thoughts and prayers are with the family members of them all and we extend our most sincere condolences to them. The vehicle crew was held in high esteem by all within the company and will be missed by all. That same day we evacuated three other Marines who had been wounded in action, two of them in a separate engagement. Our thoughts and prayers are with them, as well as their families as they recover. We will continue to press on with a renewed drive to combat the insurgency in Fallujah.

First Sergeant Charles Delcourt

Another month has passed, and we can finally say we have one more to go!!! This past month has been extremely busy for all of us as the hot weather seemed to bring combatants out of the woodwork. You should be very proud of the performance of all of your Marines and Sailors as they continue to perform phenomenal acts day in and day out and continue to push on. We have participated in a number of named operations this past month and had extremely good results. More good results have come our way in the form of promotions. We were finally able to pin Corporal chevrons on LCpl Mucklow!! LCpl Jorge was selected to the rank of Corporal through a combat meritorious promotion!! PFC Perry was promoted as well to the rank of Lance Corporal!! In addition, Cpl Dwyer and LCpl Kellenberger were awarded the Purple Heart Congratulations to all. The good news doesn't stop there, as awards approval start to trickle back and 23 more Marines have been awarded the Combat Action Ribbon. In addition, we welcomed a new addition to our family as Cpl Dwyer and his wife Nicole gave birth to a baby boy named Liam Gerard on 08 September 2006!!! Liam weighed in at 7lbs 8oz, and both mother and baby are doing well. Congratulations!!! By this time next month we will have left our temporary "home away from home"!!! As we approach our end of tour here in Iraq please keep in mind that these times are as trying for us as they are for you. The anticipation of seeing loved ones again, meeting new family members, adjusting to civilian life, etc.... can all cause undue, and often unnoticed stress that creeps up on someone. Please keep that in mind as we all move forward in our ventures. Looking forward in anticipation, until next time...



Liam Gerard Dwyer

Hello Families.....

Well, you probably have read this fact a few times so far but yes, this is our last article for the newsletter, which means our men are so close to being home OORAH!!! This deployment has been challenging and rewarding too. Because of this challenge, I have grown to be a much stronger person and I learned to have a lot of faith! It's rewarding because I have had the pleasure to be involved in the KVN. I have helped you all the best I could and I also have met a lot of new people that helped me along the way. Being a Key Volunteer, I have learned so much about the Marine Corps in such little time. I have made new friends (or should I say Family) that I will now have for life. We did the best we could with what we had and I can't be more honored to be in such an organization, which for volunteer work was run with such professionalism.

I would like to thank 1st Sgt Delcourt for his leadership in Weapons Company. He has gone above and beyond the call of duty to keep our Whiskey boys in tip top shape. He has trained them hard, and he kept them focused in good times and in bad. That's what a leader does. I am so proud that we have a leader like him. Our Marines & Sailors are learning from the best and his actions will reflect on all these Marines & Sailors, not only in their Marine Corps Career, but in their personal lives as well.

My appreciation also go out to every one of you. Our Marines & Sailors have risked everything to keep us all safe back here and I love, respect and am very proud of each and every one of them!!!

Remember, we will be having a lot of information coming your way this next month, so please, if you have email, and you have yet to receive an e-mail from me, please send it my way. It is the quickest way to get the info to you. As always, please feel free to call!

Here's to a well deserved homecoming!!!!!!!

Take Care & God Bless,

Charlotte Wills

Key Volunteer

1/25 Weapons Co.

charlottewills@rcn.com

781-894-1787

JULIE DELCOURT—PROUD MARINE WIFE

It is with mixed emotion that I write my last remarks. I sign off from this newsletter with what inspired me to take on the honor of being your Key Volunteer Coordinator for the 1st BN 25th Marines.

To the children of our Heroes— I know that sometimes this year was really confusing. Sometimes you were sad, sometimes you were mad but I bet all the time you were really proud that your Daddy is a hero. Well you are a hero too! You helped Mommy just like Daddy helped the people of Iraq. You showed her that there is always something to smile about and that everything will get better with time. You are young adults and you did your part to help Daddy get rid of the bad guys. As you enter the days of reading, writing and arithmetic, be sure to leave no detail out when your teacher asks what you did this summer. The kids who went to camp have nothing on you!

To the girlfriends— Thank you for standing by his side. I hope that you have been inspired to take a roll in your loved ones Corps. If your Marine sees to it that you become a permanent member of this family, hold this honor and respect all who benefit from it. Take on the needs of the Corps not in criticism but as your personal challenge. Continue to educate yourself, not so much through the "Chicken Soups" for your hardships but through hard facts that help you understand the basics and allow you to speak in acronyms with the best of them. I pass this torch, for you are the future of the Corps' family and an honor to all who earn the title.

To the spouses— It is the sisterhood that bonds us together and the bond that could never be translated. You are my sister. You lift to me your strength and take no consideration to what you can spare. We walk together. We are no stranger to each other nor are we to strength, anxiety, and pride. We meet for the first time but in our smiles toward one another, it is our secret hand shake of sorts. Much like our heroes, we too exist to serve side by side. You make everything possible and even though your time out from behind the curtain is brief, it is the time we spend supporting our Marine that counts most. Take your love and allegiance and pledge on with the most remarkable person on earth. Remember... you are chosen for this.

To LtCol and Penny Landro— I can't fathom this Battalion without it's CO and it's first lady. Your leadership to the Marines and your support to the families has been magnificent. How many families of Marines deployed can say that they had an open ended Q & A session with the Battalion Commander while he was in Iraq? You supported the idea of a monthly newsletter when the budget only called for it quarterly. You took the KVN seriously and saw it's value on your busiest day. And Penny, your support and compassion was always at the forefront and never once did you see the picture as unclear. It's hard to believe you are in another part of this country, you were ALWAYS a phone call or e-mail away. I will miss your leadership and will cherish the friendship alike.

To SgtMaj and Allison Trudell— How is it possible? I can't believe that there will be a drill without the tallest man on Earth both in height and in camaraderie. I remember sitting in front of the bunker watching Weapons Company in their formation. Your look to these brothers was that of a father who could not be more proud. I enjoyed every conversation. And to my advisor Allison: you pulled me out of each state of confusion and long before you took the title. You are a tour guide for the many roads a Marine wife can take. I will miss you both so much.

LtCol Conlan— you will always be Sir in my book even now that you go back to Mr. Your friendship and comic relief made for a deployment that at times felt as easy as a drill weekend. Your door was NEVER closed even when the hen house was too loud for you to think. Thank you for your support through all of my biggest efforts.

Gunny Walz— I never knew I had a brother living in California? If I could write your next fit rep, PES would have a page 15. I would talk about your landscaping ability, your beautiful wife and children (Go Normal!), your sense of humor and ability to get mine, your immeasurable talent and creativity, your ability to bring Cape Cod to tears and to build them back up again. This never felt like work with you. You brought facts to our family and you brought our family to their Marines without having to wear any Kevlar. We could not have asked more from you and personally, I could not have asked for a better brother.

To my fellow volunteers— My Dad always said "A single snowflake was simply too fragile and melts under pressure but join several together and look what they can do". Some could call us a bunch of flakes, but for me... I prefer the cold weather. Put under pressure, you formed up and soared in the direction necessary to go the distance. You will always have my friendship. Thank you to all the Battalion KV's that kept hope alive. You are all irreplaceable.

To the Marines and Sailors of 1/25— I have no enemies and I don't have to wear a burka. I don't cover my face, I worship God, I can walk right next to my husband, I can have a job, raise my children and most importantly type anything I want right here _____. Because of you, I am free.



To the Mom's & Dad's, I didn't forget you... You just deserve your own page.

Before learning the honor of raising a hero, many of
you had to learn ...



☞ A king size waterbed holds enough water to fill a 2000 sq. ft. house 4 inches deep.

☞ If you spray hair spray on dust bunnies and run over them with roller blades, they can ignite.

☞ A 3-year old Boy's voice is louder than 200 adults in a crowded restaurant.

☞ If you hook a dog leash over a ceiling fan, the motor is not strong enough to rotate a 42 pound Boy wearing Batman underwear and a Superman cape. It is strong enough, however, if tied to a paint can, to spread paint on all four walls of a 20x20 ft. room.

☞ The glass in windows (even double-pane) doesn't stop a baseball hit by a ceiling fan.

☞ When you hear the toilet flush and the words "uh oh", it's already too late.

☞ Certain Lego's will pass through the digestive tract of a 4-year old Boy.

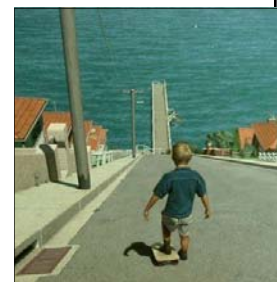
☞ Super glue is forever.

☞ VCR's do not eject "PB & J" sandwiches even though TV commercials show they do.

☞ Always look in the oven before you turn it on; plastic toys do not like ovens.

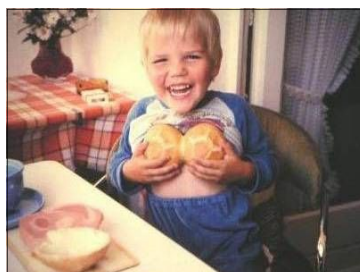
☞ The spin cycle on the washing machine does not make earthworms dizzy. It will, however, make cats dizzy. Cats throw up twice their body weight when dizzy.

☞ The time it takes to raise a hero feels like a moment but the pride in doing so lasts forever.



God bless those

who raise the defenders of our freedom



Submitted via e-mail from a Mom who is truly a Mother to the Corps...



CAPTAIN JACK HOBAN USMCR

CAPTAIN HOBAN, TRUE WARRIOR AND DEAR FRIEND OF THE 1STBN 25TH MARINES

To the Marines of 1st Battalion 25th Marines:

Since last November when I had the honor of speaking with you at your Marine Corps Ball I have been following your glorious service to our nation and the people of Iraq from the safety and comfort of America. You have been performing under difficult and dangerous conditions; you have lost a few of your own, and saved the lives of many others. Wherever you walked, people were safer because you were there – except, of course, those who rejected the concept that all people are created equal and must not be terrorized and killed for their social, religious or political affiliations. Those you dispatched in a professional way, because you had to in order to protect life and accomplish your mission.

As you return home, along with your pride at a job well done, it will be natural to carry a residue of your exhaustion, fear, and maybe, anger with you. Your mission now is, to the very best of your ability, to shield your loved spouses, children, family and friends from feeling these terrible things through you. They are warrior things, things that the average person never experiences, cannot understand, and must be protected from. It will be difficult for you to do this. But you are warriors; you can do it. There is a saying: "You always hurt the ones you love." But not you. Not 1/25. Whenever you return home, everybody is glad that you are there.

I salute you all. Semper Fidelis,

Jack Hoban

Capt USMCR

Subject Matter Expert

Marine Corps Martial Arts Program



Thank you 1/25 Families
for contributing over 50 volunteers
and 200 runners.

Much like your Marines, you answered the call
and made a difference.

See you next year!



Key Volunteer Network
1st Battalion 25th Marines
4th Marine Division
53 Quebec Street
Devens RFTA
Ayer, Massachusetts 01432-4424



Mailing Address

A very Happy Birthday to our extended Marine Family Members who celebrate a Birthday in the Month of September...



Carla Smith
Thomas Mulligan
Ruth Morin
Darlyn Lindsay
Gary Liles
Joseph Donaher

Cora Rideout
Lori Gormley
Real Nadeau
Marian McCarter
Amanda Grieb
Maria Olmo
Katherine Duggan

And to all who celebrate a birthday
after this publication, a happy birthday to you too!